

Kunstverein in Hamburg

Coumba Samba

deutschland

24.05. — 10.08.2025

Coumba Samba's exhibition *deutschland* for the Kunstverein in Hamburg negotiates the intricate relationship between structure, form, and colour as constituents of coded systems of global infrastructure. Monochromatic geometric forms, stacked throughout the gallery, evoke the visual language of international supply chains, while directional strobe lights that lend the space a sense of rhythm, mark pathways on the floor. The large container-like structures sculptures rest at different degrees of ease. Their rigid geometries recall the compositions of early 20th-century abstract geometric paintings. Samba's installation, however, diverges from this art-historical precedent by lending the monochromes a sense of coded meaning and cultural resonance, transforming *deutschland* into an opaque system whose logic remains elusive, like a glitching interface that never fully resolves. *deutschland* builds on Samba's exhibition *Red Gas* (2024) at Arcadia Missa, London, in which painted radiators become the endpoint and signifier of the Russian gas industry's entanglement with the African and European continents. At the Kunstverein, the structures evoke a similar tension between the static and material residue amidst globalisation's sleepless flow. As ubiquitous symbols of global trade—now central to debates around U.S. tariff wars—they also interrogate the uneasy relationship between free trade agreements and sovereignty, which international supply chains willingly or unwillingly transform. In this context, the colours, chosen to resonate with both cultural and emotional connotations, become a language through which Samba dissects a world dominated by networks of capital. The strobing lights echo the architecture of the stateless hub—guiding the flow of goods, data, and people. Viewers navigating the exhibition become participants in this ecology, moving through the space as though traversing a port or a terminal at night—zones that are both material and conceptual, and where the logic of borders is increasingly porous. This interplay—between the mechanical and the affective, between a sense of direction and being without coordinates—reveals how infrastructure, often unseen,

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comes to reflect and define human experience within vast, impersonal frameworks.

As this matrix of endpoints, remote nodes and opaque ideology strains under its own logic and latently begins to warp, geometries of power and place scramble. Where *deutschland* began as a metaphor for a sense of locale within a larger network of flows, it becomes a disorientingly intimate experience of globalisation's distorting abstraction, as a system of navigation adrift, eroding the sense of geography that conjured it.

Curated by Milan Ther

The exhibition is organised in collaboration with Lumiar Cité, Lisbon, and is kindly supported by the Zeit Stiftung Bucerius, Arcadia Missa Gallery, London, Francesco Francica and Silvia Valentini, and Bernard Ruiz-Picasso.

Thanks to the generous support of the Hapag-Lloyd Stiftung the Kunstverein is open until 9 pm every first Thursday of the month.

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Biography

Coumba Samba (*2000, lives in New York) engages with the impacts of institutional structures on both individual and collective identities through her multimedia and performative practice, questioning dominant cultural narratives. Her works address themes such as consumer culture, social dynamics, and the intersections of technology and identity, exploring the dynamics between mainstream culture and subversive practices. In doing so, she expands the gaze to the global web of power and the continuities of colonialism, highlighting how colonial structures and their legacies continue to shape contemporary social and political landscapes.

Selected solo exhibitions include *Dress Code*, empire, New York, US (2024); *Red Gas*, Arcadia Missa, London, UK (2024); *Capital*, Cell Project Space, London, UK (2024); *This is Money*, Drei, Cologne, DE (2024); and *Couture*, Galerina, London, UK (2023). Recent group exhibitions include *Undermining the Immediacy*, MMK, Frankfurt, DE (2025); *Ensemble*, The Perimeter, London, UK (2025); *ZONE*, Reena Spaulings, New York, US (2024); *118 1/2*, Emalin, London, UK (2024); *A Crooked World*, Drei, Cologne, DE (2023); *Slow Dance (3)*, Stadtgalerie, Bern, CH (2023); *Ways of Living 3.0*, Arcadia Missa, London, UK (2023); *World as diagram*, work as dance, Emalin, London, UK (2023); *Hello*, Galerina, London, UK (2022).

Programme Highlights

deutschland is accompanied by a film programme organized by Coumba Samba to depict the historic representation of global power relations in mainstream visual culture.

Screening

Southward with Prince Philip, (1957), 13 min.,
Atlantiques, (2009), Mati Diop, 16 min.,
Wednesday, May 28, at 6.30 pm

Screening

The Ghost Fair Trade, (2022), Laurence Bonvin & Cheikh Ndiaye, 38 min.
Tuesday, June 17, at 6.30 pm

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Screening and Q&A

Das Rotohr, (2023), Paul Drey, 30 min.

Tuesday, July 8, at 6.30 pm

Screening

James Bond 007 – Tomorrow never dies, (1997), Roger Spottiswoode, 1h 59 min.

Thursday, August 8, at 7.30 pm

Guided Tours

Director's Tour

Tuesday, July 1, at 6 pm

Guided Tours in Turkish Language with Eda Aslan

Saturday, Jun 14 and July 19, at 2 pm

Public Guided Tours

Every first Thursday of the month at 7 pm, every other Thursday at 5 pm.

Press Material

Installation views and images are available on request.

Further information can be found on our website.

Press Contact

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